



**MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ST. CHARLES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
JANUARY 21, 2026**

The Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the St. Charles Public Library District was held Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at the Library. Present: President Mary Kruse, Vice President/Secretary Bonnie J. Dauer, Trustees Claudia Frost, and Barbara Diepenbrock, Director Kate Buckson, and Administrative Assistant Virginia Tspas. Absent: Treasurer Michael J. Hill, Trustees Allison Lanthrum and Jane Shelton.

Library staff present: Patty Lakoma, Mary Merritt, Junior Renteria.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Kruse called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

II. ROLL CALL, RECORDING TRUSTEES PRESENT AND ABSENT

Trustee Kruse confirmed there was a quorum present through roll call.

III. TRUSTEE TRAINING

None.

IV. STATISTICS DASHBOARD

Beginning February 2026, Library statistics will be reported through Microsoft Power BI. The Power BI platform provides more information, with additional pages providing the breakdown of statistics. It is user friendly and visually appealing. There is a substantial cost savings with Power BI, compared to OpenGov.

The Library Staff Report will be created on a new platform beginning February 2026, Microsoft Sway. It is more interactive, links to YouTube videos, and has more dynamic content.

V. POLICY DISCUSSION

Public Bidding

The Library attorney reviewed this policy and found that the wrong statute was referenced in the policy. This has not caused a material difference in previous bidding events. The Library insurance company has also reviewed this policy, and the insurance liability limits have changed. The policy will be revised to reflect these matters.

Exclusion of Patrons

Procedures included in this policy have been removed. This policy relates to banned patrons who request the Board to reconsider their ban. A patron is banned when there is a serious threat to staff and/or patrons. The policy states that banned patron matters can be discussed in closed sessions, but it is not an exception for closed sessions. The matter would be discussed in open session of a Board meeting. If the banned patron does not wish to have their matter discussed in open session, they could request a conference with the Library director and Board president.

Indemnification

With the enactment of the new Narcan law, this policy was created. The Library will follow the law, and as stated in the Illinois Constitution, the Board and Library staff are protected in the event of a lawsuit. The Library has insurance coverage in case there is a need. The Library attorney has reviewed this policy. The policy references statute 735, and it should be revised to 745.

Inclusivity

The EDI Statement approved by the Board in 2020 has not been reviewed. Creating a policy is the next step as Library policies are reviewed regularly. The Library attorney's recommendation is to stick with a statement. There is a feeling that residents may view the policy as a political statement. The attorney said to use caution and remain neutral.

Trustees felt that the statements in the proposed Inclusivity Policy are covered in other approved policies for the Library. The Board decided to table the Inclusivity Policy and stated it could be discussed at a future Committee of the Whole Meeting.

It was suggested to consider adding language in the EDI Statement, noting that the Library's actions include, and are not limited to a, b, c. A suggestion was made to remove the last sentence in the EDI Statement, "Ultimately, it is the choices we make as individuals that will grow the integrity of our community." This seems to put the burden of action on individuals in our community, rather than the responsibility of the Library.

Ms. Buckson said she could work on a webpage dedicated to EDI and links regarding Illinois law. The webpage would be in test mode to share with Trustees and Library staff.

VI. SECRETARY'S AUDIT OF MINUTES

The Secretary's Minutes and recordings for the period July 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025, were reviewed and found to be in good order without discrepancies. The Minutes are linked properly on the website, and all documents requiring signatures by the Board were reviewed and are in good order.

VII. ROLL CALL VOTE TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION FOR:

- a. "Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under this Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06 of the Act 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21)"**

Motion by Trustee Kruse, second by Trustee Dauer, to go into closed session at 7:03 pm, to hold a discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under this Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06 of the Act 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21). **AYES:** Kruse, Dauer, Frost, Diepenbrock. **NAYS:** None.

ABSTAINING: None. **ABSENT:** Hill, Lanthrum, Shelton.

VIII. ADJOURN TO OPEN SESSION

Open session reconvened at 7:11 pm.

FACILITY PROJECT UPDATE

The Facility Project Team is composed of Ms. Buckson, Ms. Merritt and Mr. Renteria. The parking lot tentative timeline was discussed. The bid announcement has been published in the Daily Herald today. Bid documents will be available on the Cordogan Clark website on January 26, 2026. Bids are due by February 26, 2026, and will be opened that day by the deadline. The architects will make a recommendation by early March, and it will be brought before the Board in April for approval. A project meeting will be held tomorrow. The project is on target.

Findings from the roof assessment have been reviewed and two sections can be repaired more effectively than originally planned. The repairs will prolong the roof life for 20 years. Some parts of the roof have more repairs, including insulation. Drawings for permits will be submitted to the city.

Bids for the roof and parking lot are being handled separately. The plan is to have the parking lot completed in late spring, this fiscal year. The roofing can wait a little longer and will be completed in the fall of 2026, next fiscal year.

Ms. Buckson provided an update on future grants. The DCEO grant process involves a lot of paperwork. We will be assigned a grant liaison. The process for most capital grants can take two years. The funds received from this grant may not go towards the parking lot and roofing projects due to timing. This has yet to be determined.

With the Riverboat grant, the Library will apply by the March deadline to receive \$100,000.

The Carnegie grant for \$10,000 is expected by the end of January, however, no funds have been delivered to this point. The Board will discuss how the funds from this grant will be spent.

BOARD EVALUATION

Trustee Kruse asked the Trustees to complete the Board evaluation prior to the February Board meeting and send their completed evaluation to her. If there are concerns, she can meet with each Trustee one-on-one. The Board evaluation may be discussed at the future Committee of the Whole Meeting.

BOARD RETREAT PROPOSAL FROM KATIE WATTS

Trustee Kruse stated that one of her goals as president is to grow Board communication. Consultant Katie Watts has a master's degree in education and has worked with non-profits, coaching and training both staff and boards. The fee for the retreat will also include a follow up with the Board at the July Committee of the Whole Meeting. Ms. Buckson stated she may invite managers who work closely with the Board to attend. The retreat proposal will be placed on the agenda at the February Board meeting.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Trustee Frost, second by Trustee Diepenbrock, to adjourn at 7:39 pm. Carried unanimously.



Bonnie J. Dauer
Secretary, Board of Trustees